

## SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 27 AUGUST 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by ..... [your name, call sign and QTH]

You may tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings, at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English, on HF as well as on many VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. Echolink listeners may connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League's web site.

This audio bulletin may be downloaded from the League website at [www.sarl.org.za](http://www.sarl.org.za) where you will find this as well as previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you may sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

In the news today,

THE SARL HF CW CONTEST THIS AFTERNOON

PEARS HANDLE TRANS-BAVIAANS MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE AGAIN.

and

AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER WORLDS

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

THE SARL HF CW CONTEST THIS AFTERNOON

The last of the three SARL HF Contests, the HF CW Contest, is on the air this afternoon, Sunday 27 August from 13:00 to 16:30 UTC with CW activity on 20, 40 and 80 metres. As in the previous two contests, you need to work as many zones and stations per band and try to work the station on all three bands. The exchange is a RST report and a consecutive serial number starting at 001.

There are two SARL trophies up for grabs in the CW contest, but if you participated in all three contests, you may win some more trophies. The rules are on page 34 of the 2017 SARL Blue Book, read the rules before the contest starts. Log sheets must only be sent to [zs4bfm@mweb.co.za](mailto:zs4bfm@mweb.co.za)

SOLAR ECLIPSE QSO PARTY A HIT, SCIENCE CONCLUSIONS AWAIT ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

The 2017 Solar Eclipse QSO Party (SEQP) is history and, while logs are still coming in, the preliminary participation numbers look good, according to Nathaniel Frissell, W2NAF, of HamSCI.

“Although the final numbers are not yet in, preliminary reports show that over 670 000 spots were detected by the Reverse Beacon Network (RBN) and over 542 000 spots were reported to PSKReporter during the SEQP,” Frissell told the ARRL on 22 August. “These numbers will increase as data is processed.”

Frissell said overall, the event went well and he heard a lot of on-the-air activity during the 8 hours the SEQP was running.

“It will take some time to get a more scientific analysis of this, but we should have some results by the middle of this semester,” said Frissell, who is an associate research professor at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Frissell and others are investigating whether the sudden absence of sunlight during the eclipse - and especially of solar ultra-violet and x-rays - would briefly change the properties of the upper atmosphere. (The ARRL Letter)

#### THE 24TH IARU REGION 1 GENERAL CONFERENCE

The 24th IARU Region 1 General Conference will take place from 16 to 22 September at the Sparkassen Akademie Bayern in Landshut, Germany. Landshut is about 70 kilometres east of Munich. The Opening Plenary will be held on Sunday 16 September followed by the various Working Group meetings. From Monday to Wednesday, the main committees will meet - the Credentials and Finance Committee (C2); the General Administrative and Organisational Committee (C3); the permanent HF Committee (C4); the permanent VHF/UHF and Microwaves Committee (C5) and the permanent EMC Committee (C7). There will be a workshop on Growth Strategies for Amateur Radio and a presentation on WRTC-2018 that will be held in Germany in July 2018.

The Final Plenary will be held on Thursday 21 September during which the various recommendations from the Committees will be put to the vote. The new Executive Committee will be elected and the vote for the venue of the 2020 Conference will take place during the Plenary. On Friday 22 September, delegates will be visiting BMW World during the day and the Oktoberfest on Friday evening.

The South African Radio League will be represented by Nico van Rensburg, ZS6QL, and Rassie Erasmus, ZS1YT. Rassie is on the list of nominees for the new EC. Dennis Green, ZS4BS, the Region 1 Secretary will be stepping down after this conference - he has come to the end of his third term of office and cannot be re-elected.

#### PEARS HANDLE TRANS-BAVIAANS MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE AGAIN

The Trans-Baviaans Mountain bike race is a gruelling cycling event that takes cyclists through the Baviaanskloof. As most of the route is in the Kloof where there is still no cell phone infrastructure, the role played by the radio amateurs is vital. The event takes place over two weekends with almost a thousand teams putting themselves to the test.

PEARS, with the aid of Chris Scarr, ZS2AAW, setup a communications network that catered for the needs of the organisers. Tony Allen, ZR2TX, with Bevean, ZS2RL, and Mel, ran the Venue Operations Centre from the new venue in the Jbay Mall. An additional information dispersal point was manned near Patensie so that teams and supporters on the ground could also get information on their team's progress without having to go into Jeffery's Bay.

An APRS backbone was setup and used to convey the team checkpoint times as well as to allow the tracking of various vehicles. Two different methods were implemented so that they could compare and identify strengths and weaknesses for the two approaches. Two sites were using Dire Wolf directly and the others were using traditional TNCs. Use was also made of the SARTrack software package so that members could become familiar with the features offered. SARTrack is a free computer program designed for use in Search and Rescue and comes out of New Zealand. SARTrack integrates asset (vehicle) tracking, APRS messaging and off-line mapping, and a whole lot more in an easy to use interface. SARTrack is free for download from the website [www.sartrack.co.nz](http://www.sartrack.co.nz).

A separate voice channel was available for some friendly banter and of course, vital traffic in the case of medical emergencies. Fortunately, there were no serious injuries and competitor withdrawals and evacuations were controlled with ease. The second of the two weekends overlapped with the Lighthouse weekend. HF was setup and several lighthouses had QSOs with checkpoints along the route. QSOs with both ZS1 and ZS5 stations were made from Bergplaas - one of the higher checkpoints along the route. The weather was favourable and the outings enjoyed by all the radio amateurs. Several cyclists attended BOTH weekends which would suggest they enjoyed it too.

#### SEPTEMBER 2017 RADIO ZS

The closing date for your article for the September Radio ZS was on Saturday 26 August, but the editor will still accept your article until tomorrow and you can send it to [radiozs@sarl.org.za](mailto:radiozs@sarl.org.za). The editor is also looking for photographs for the front cover, which must be in portrait format.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

#### AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER WORLDS

Eighty years ago, it would have been science fiction if someone had to mention space travel, no one would have believed you anyway and it was only featured in comics like Flash Gordon. Since World War II numerous artificial earth satellites have been launched, men have landed on the Moon, spacecraft have settled on Mars, on a moon of Saturn and another on an asteroid, while Voyager 2 did a fly-past of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. Voyager 1 continued into interstellar space and is now 21 billion kilometres from Earth and still in radio contact with NASA.

Radio amateurs have worked many stations on planet Earth via EME or satellites, or from the International Space Station (ISS). Mars is closest to Earth at over 55 million kilometres, but when it travels around the Sun it could reach a maximum distance of about 400 million kilometres. The question is would the amateur radio service be able to work stations on planet Mars when compared with our nearest neighbour, the Moon, which is only 400 000 kilometres away? Read more in the September 2017 issue of Radio ZS. BEACON NEWS

This week saw some Beaconeers achieve really amazing distances on 40 metres

where conditions have improved since last week. Some Beaconeers are currently experimenting with two antennas to observe the differences in radiation patterns and also the differences between low and high power. For more information on how to join this exciting branch of our hobby please contact Leon Uys, ZR6LU, on +27 82 573 5580

#### RESULTS OF THE SARL HF PHONE CONTEST

The Contest Committee received 26 logs for the SARL HF Phone Contest held on Sunday 6 August 2017. The full results are available in HF Happenings 764.

1st Jan Botha, ZS4JAN - 231 points 2nd Woody Collet, ZS3WL - 139 points  
3rd Marinus Willemstijn, ZS6MAW - 122 points 4th Hans Kappetijn, ZS6KR - 114 points

The highest score achieved on a single band was by Woody Collet, ZS3WL, with 104 points on 40 metres. The Committee would like to award the AKYAB Trophy for the amateur who achieved the highest score in his/her first year of phone, but nobody marked their logs.

In the Club Competition, the results are 1st Highway ARC 314 points 2nd Bloemfontein ARC 302 points 3rd Pretoria ARC 205 points

#### RESULTS OF THE SARL YL SPRINT

The Contest Committee received 16 logs for the SARL YL Sprint held on Wednesday 9 August 2017. Five YLs from ZS5 and one each from ZS2 and ZS3 submitted logs. The full results are available in HF Happenings 764 which you will find at [www.sarl.org.za/hf\\_happenings.asp](http://www.sarl.org.za/hf_happenings.asp).

1st Alta Gaybba, ZR3PA 139 points 2nd Collette Rundle, ZS2CR 126 points  
3rd Dawn Snyders, ZS5ME 124 points 4th Heather Holland, ZS5YH 87 points

#### CONTESTS IN SEPTEMBER

The second leg of the SARL National Field Day will run from 10:00 UTC on Saturday 9 September to 10:00 UTC on Sunday 10 September with CW, SSB and digital modes on 160 to 10 metres.

The second leg of the SARL VHF/UHF Contest will run from 10:00 UTC on Saturday 16 September to 10:00 UTC on Sunday 17 September with FM, SSB, CW and digital modes from 6 metres and up to the microwaves.

The Africa All Mode International DX Contest is on the air from 12:00 UTC on Saturday 16 September to 12:00 UTC on Sunday 17 September with CW, RTTY and SSB on 160 to 10 metres. You will find all the information in the 2017 SARL Blue Book.

#### RE-BIRTH OF THE OTL CLUB

It is with great appreciation and excitement that we announce that the OTL Club is active once again. For the past several years the OTL Club was only a name but after some lobbying, an AGM was held on 13 May. There was

a good turn-out and a new committee was elected. With a lot of work, the Club managed to bring the Middelburg 145,7375 repeater and the linking UHF repeater at Steenkampsberg back on the air. The Lowveld repeaters are each in their respective stages of sourcing of equipment, finding a high site and finally returning them back on the air.

The OTL Club currently has 27 paid up members and a committee of four members. Chairman - David Jansen van Rensburg, ZS6VS Sectary - Yvonne Jansen van Rensburg, ZS6BSH Public Relations and Training - Pieter Jacobs, ZS6XP Technical Coordinator - Ernst Du Plessis, ZR6BDZ Visit the Club on its Facebook page “ZS6OTL Amateur Radio Club” for activities and news.

#### BLOEMFONTEIN ARC AGM

The AGM of the Bloemfontein ARC will be held at 14:00 on Saturday 2 September at their Club house at the CBC School in Wilcocks Road. The usual bring and braai will follow the meeting with a boot sale on the side. Contact Dennis, ZS4BS on 082 770 9126 for more details.

#### WEST RAND FLEA MARKET

The West Rand Amateur Radio Club is hosting its next flea market at 12:00 on Saturday 2 September 2017 at their clubhouse in Kroton street, Weltevreden Park in Roodepoort. Everybody is welcome, so bring along your surplus equipment and support the vendors on the day. For more information, contact Geoff ZS6C on 082 546 5546

#### PRETORIA ARC AGM

The 87th Annual General Meeting of the Pretoria Amateur Radio Club will be held on 23 September 2017 at the club house of the Pretoria Motor Club in Keuning Street in Silverton. All members and interested parties are welcome to join the AGM. Please bring a braai pack with for the bring and braai afterwards.

#### PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low to moderate levels. Sunspots AR 2671 and 2672 may still produce C-class solar flares. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around eighteen. The 15 to 30 m bands will provide lots of DX fun. 60 m will be the best band during day time for shorter distance, NVIS contacts. Please visit the website [spaceweather.sansa.org.za](http://spaceweather.sansa.org.za) for further information.

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

27 August the SARL HF CW Contest 2 September - West Rand ARC Flea Market and Bloemfontein ARC AGM 9 and 10 September - the SARL National Field Day 16 and 17 September the SARL VHF/UHF Contest and the Africa All Mode International DX Contest 16 to 23 September the 24th IARU Region 1 General Conference 23 September - Pretoria ARC AGM

To conclude our bulletin, a quick overview of our main news item:

The last of the three SARL HF Contests, the HF CW Contest, is on the air this afternoon, Sunday 27 August from 13:00 to 16:30 UTC with CW activity on 20, 40 and 80 metres. As in the previous two contests, you need to work as many zones and stations per band and try to work the station on all three bands. The exchange is a RST report and a consecutive serial number starting at 001.

This brings us to the end of this bulletin.

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to [artoday@sarl.org.za](mailto:artoday@sarl.org.za). Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by .....

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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